

(c) whether Government have been contemplating partial privatisation of both the airlines; and

(d) if so; the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): Yes, Sir.

(b) There is scope for improvement. Both the airlines constantly endeavour to bring about improvements in the services rendered to the passengers both on the ground and in the air.

(c) and (d) The Government has approved in principle, bringing down the equity of the Government of India in Air India to 40% through a process of disinvestment by sale of 40% of equity to a strategic partner, upto 10% to employees and the balance by sale to financial institutions and/or on the share market. In the event of the strategic partner being a joint venture with an element of foreign holding, the arrangement should be such as would limit foreign holding in Air India to a maximum of 260% of the total equity.

As regards, Indian Airlines, Government has decided to disinvest 51 percent of equity of Indian Airlines out of which 26 percent of the equity would be given to a strategic partner. Remaining 25% of the equity would be offered to employees, financial institutions and public.

Civil Aviation Policy

171. SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Draft Civil Aviation Policy is under the consideration of Government;

(b) if so, what are the primary objectives of the proposed policy and by what time the policy is likely to be formulated;

(c) whether it is a fact that there are serious differences about creation of Civil Aviation Authority;

(d) if so, the details and functions of Authority; and

(e) what would be the future role of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and Bureau of Civil Aviation Security in the event of creation of Civil Aviation Authority?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The draft Civil Aviation Policy, seeks to set up a policy framework to promote efficient, cost effective and orderly growth of air transport, ensure safety and security in accordance with international standards and generate a healthy competitive civil aviation environment which contributes to social and economic development of the country. This policy document is being finalised and will be announced in the near future.

Expansion of Indian Airlines Service from Guwahati

172. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several major towns like Tezpur, Jorhat, Dibrugarh and Silchar are not connected with Guwahati through Indian Airlines network; if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government will seriously consider to connect these towns with Guwahati, the capital of Assam, through Indian Airlines?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. However, Indian Airlines operates 2 flights to tezpur, 4 flights to Jorhat, 4 flights to Dibrugarh and 6 flights to Silchar per week from Calcutta. In addition, daily flights are operated to Guwahati from Delhi and Calcutta.

(b) Constraints of aircraft capacity and commercial considerations do not at present permit airlinking of Guwahati with Tezpur, Jorhat, Dibrugarh and silchar.

Re-Building of AAI's Image

173. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India has a scheme to re-build its image;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how far the AAI has succeeded with this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Airports Authority of India do not have a specific scheme to re-build its image, but takes up the task of corporate image building through on-going process of media briefing and information dissemination.